



Minnesota Public Utilities Commission



# Public Information and Scoping Meeting

Clearbrook Transmission Project

Public Utilities Commission Docket Number

- ET-6/TL-14-665





# Meeting Purpose

- Explain the Commission's review process
- Provide information about the proposed project
- Gather information for the environmental review
- Answer general questions about the process and the project



# Public Utilities Commission

- ❑ State Agency
- ❑ Regulates
  - Permitting for power plants, pipelines, transmission lines
  - Local and in-state long distance telephone companies
  - Investor-owned electric and natural gas utilities – rates and services
- ❑ 5 Commissioners
  - Appointed by the Governor
  - Serve staggered terms
  - Full time employment
- ❑ 50 staff



# High Voltage Transmission Line

- Will operate at 100 kV or more *and*
- Greater than 1500 feet in length
  
- Requires **Route Permit** from Minnesota Public Utilities Commission
  - Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 216E
  - Minnesota Rules, Part 7850



# Who's Who?

- **Applicant** – Company asking for Route Permit – *Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.*
- **Department of Commerce Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA)** – State agency, conducts environmental review
- **Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH)** – State agency, Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) holds hearings, summarizes the facts in the record, writes report for Public Utilities Commission



# Who's Who?

- **Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Energy Facilities Planner** – Assists in building the record. Informs Commissioners on impacts of different decisions. Neutral party, does not give legal advice, not an advocate.
- **Public Utilities Commission (PUC) Public Advisor** – Helps citizens participate in the certificate of need and route permit processes. Neutral party, does not give legal advice, not an advocate.



# Factors Considered in Public Utilities Commission's Decision

- ☐ Human settlement – displacement, noise, aesthetics, cultural values, recreation, public services
- ☐ Public health and safety
- ☐ Economy– agriculture, forestry, tourism, mining
- ☐ Archaeological and historic resources
- ☐ Natural environment – air, water, plants, animals



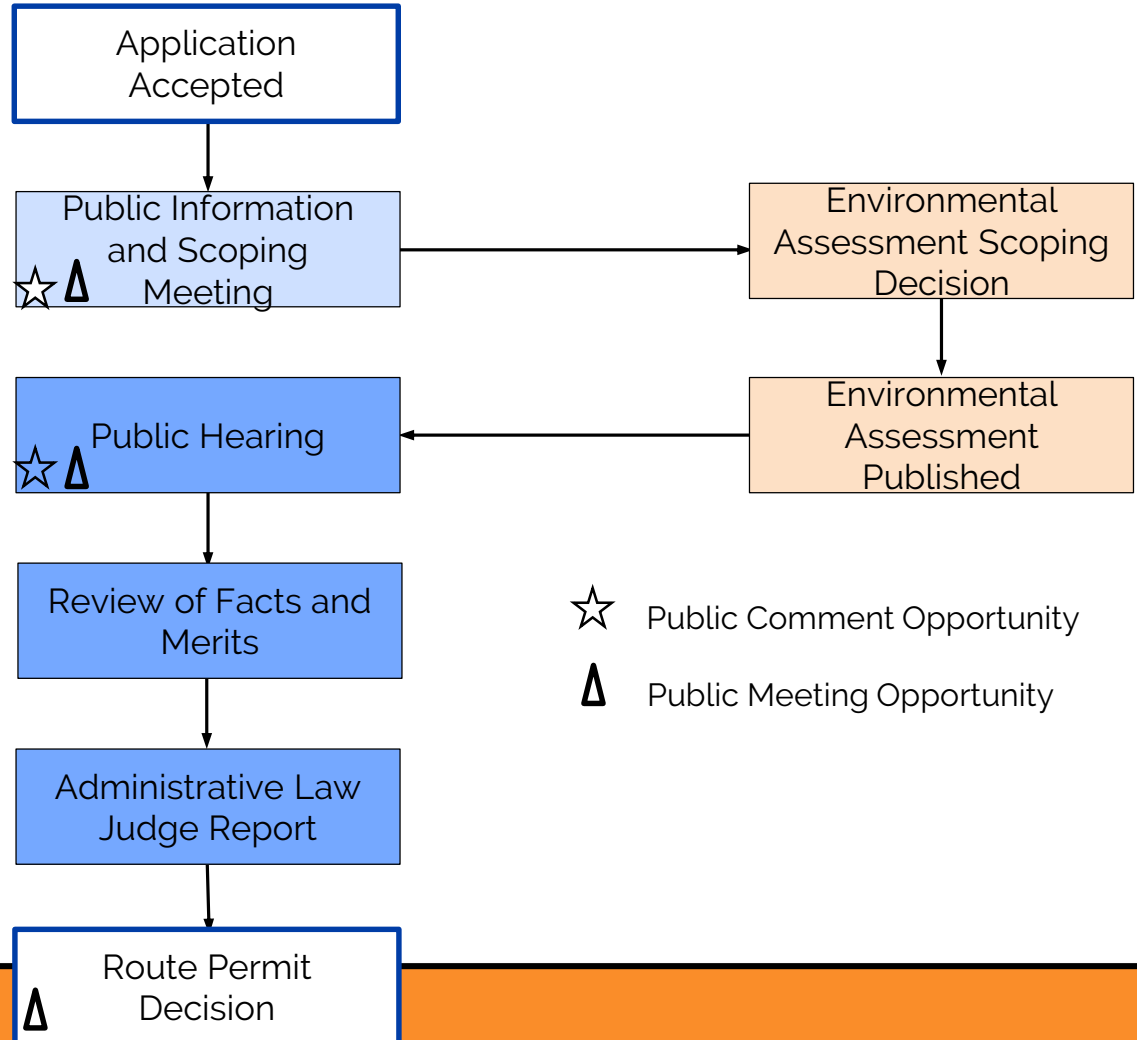
# Factors Considered

- ☐ Maximize energy efficiencies
- ☐ Allow for future expansion
- ☐ Use of existing rights-of way
- ☐ Use of natural boundaries - survey lines, field boundaries
- ☐ Electrical system reliability
- ☐ Costs to construct, operate, and maintain the transmission line





# Route Permit Process





# Estimated Project Timeline

Route Permit Application Filed	November 2015
Route Permit Application Accepted	January 2016
*Public Information & Scoping Meeting	February 2016
Comment Period Closes	March 7, 2016
Environmental Assessment Scoping Decision	May 2016
Environmental Assessment Published	August 2016
Public Hearing	August 2016
Administrative Law Judge Report	September 2016
Commission route Decision	October 2016



# Sample Notice of Comment Period



Minnesota Public Utilities Commission

*Daniel P. Wolf*

Daniel P. Wolf, Executive Secretary

## NOTICE OF COMMENT PERIOD

*Issued: December 4, 2015*

**In the Matter of the Application of Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc.'s for a Route Permit under the Alternative Permitting Process for the Clearbrook-Clearbrook West 115 kV HVTL Project**

→ **PUC Docket Number/s:** ET6/TL-14-665

→ **Comment Period:** Initial comment period closes December 16, 2015 at 4:30pm  
Reply comment period closes December 23, 2015 at 4:30pm

*Comments must be received by 4:30pm on the close date  
Comments received after comment period closes may not be considered*

### Topics Open for Comment:

- Does the route permit application contain the information required by Minnesota Rules parts 7850.1900?
- Are there any contested issues of fact with respect to the representations made in the application?
- Should the Commission appoint an advisory task force?
- Any other project-related issues or concerns?



# KEYS to Sending Comments

- ☐ Include the docket number (*14-665*)
- ☐ Stick to topics listed
- ☐ No need to submit comments more than once
- ☐ Verbal and written comments carry the same weight
- ☐ Commission's decision based on facts in the record
- ☐ Comments are public information
- ☐ Must be received before deadline



# How to Learn More

See all documents related to this project

- ☐ [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc)
- ☐ Select *Search eDockets*
- ☐ Enter the year and the Docket Number
  - 14 is the year and 665 is the number
  - Select *Search*
- ☐ The list of documents will appear on the next page



# How to Learn More

## Project Mailing List

- ❑ Receive information about project milestones and opportunities for citizen participation
  - Email or US Mail
  - Complete and return *Project Mailing List* card
  - Contact the Public Utilities Commission
    - [docketing.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:docketing.puc@state.mn.us)
    - 651-201-2204 or 1-800-657-3782



# How to Learn More

**Subscribe** to receive email notification when new documents are added to the Docket

1. [mn.gov/puc](http://mn.gov/puc)
2. Select *Subscribe to a Docket*
3. Type your email address
4. For *Type of Subscription*, select *Docket Number*
5. For *Docket Number*, select *14* in the first box, type *665* in the second box
6. Select *Add to List*

\*Subscribing may result in a large number of emails



# How to Learn More

## Subscribe to Dockets

### Instructions

You may subscribe to receive electronic notification of documents filed before the MNF. You will receive electronic notification at the email address you provide below. You may

Email Address:

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Type of Subscription:

Docket Number ▼ \*

Docket Number:

14 ▼ 665 \*

Description:

Route Permit Application Under the  
Alternative Permitting Process for the  
Clearbrook-Clearbrook West 115 kV

Add to List

Remove from List





# PUC Project Contacts

Public Advisor  
Public Utilities Commission  
Tracy M.B. Smetana  
[consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us)  
Phone 651-296-0406  
Toll Free 1-800-657-3782

Energy Facilities Planner  
Public Utilities Commission  
Tricia DeBleeckere  
[tricia.debleeckere@state.mn.us](mailto:tricia.debleeckere@state.mn.us)  
Phone 651-201-2254

# Minnkota Power Cooperative

## Clearbrook to Clearbrook West 115kV HVTL Project

*MNPUC DOCKET NO.  
ET6/TL-14-665*

**Minnkota Power**  
MPC COOPERATIVE, INC.  
Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

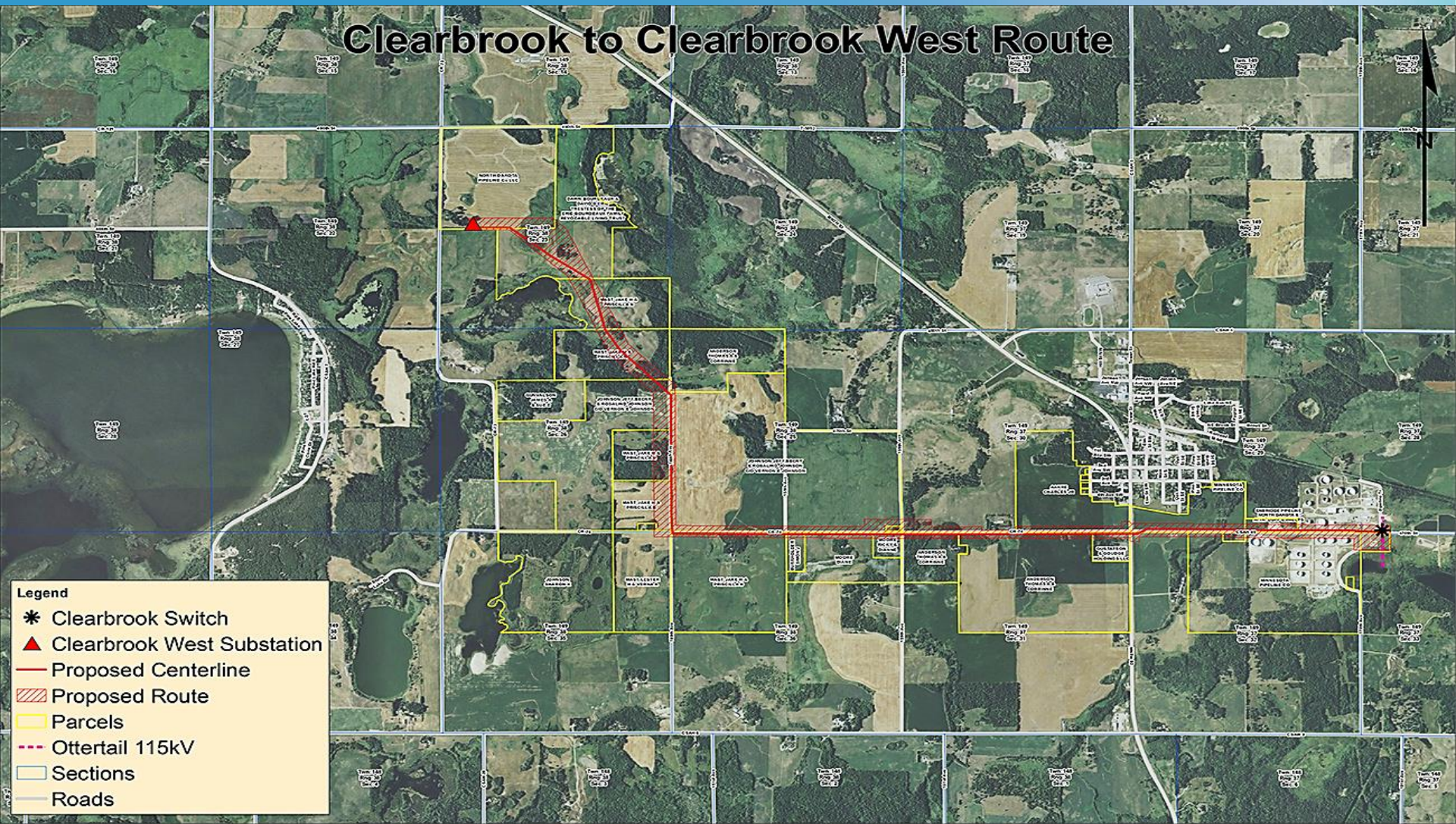


# Project Need

- The project would provide electrical service to distribution cooperative's customer load in Pine Lake Township.
- Construct new 115kV substation – Clearbrook West Substation
- Construct approximately 5.3 miles of 115kV transmission line to service Clearbrook West Substation



# Clearbrook to Clearbrook West Route





# Project Route

- The general route width varies between 205' – 500'
- Areas of additional width
  - *Near the Clearbrook West Substation and the eastern tie-in*



# Project Right-of-Way (ROW)

- ROW width 100' (designated as 50' either side of the centerline of transmission line)
- Easements will be negotiated with landowners for required ROW

# Proposed Transmission Structures

- Single pole wood or steel structures 65' – 95' above ground will be used in most areas
- Where existing distribution lines exist, distribution line will be placed underground
- Pole structure spacing between 300' – 350'
- Three-pole guyed structures used to span wetlands (2) and to stay out of existing pipeline right of way (3)

# Proposed Transmission Structures

## Single-Pole Structure



## Three-Pole Structure





# Construction Process

- Stake clearing limits and ROW/easement centerline
- Tree clearing
- Pole delivery and setting
- Conductor stringing
- Site restoration

# Project Contacts

- **John Graves**
  - Environmental Manager
  - 1822 Mill Road
  - Grand Forks, ND 58206-3200
  - 701-795-4000
  - [jgraves@minnkota.com](mailto:jgraves@minnkota.com)
- **Brian Hoffart**
  - Right-of-Way/Property Manager
  - 1822 Mill Road
  - Grand Forks, ND 58206-3200
  - 701-795-4000
  - [bhoffart@minnkota.com](mailto:bhoffart@minnkota.com)
- **Jay Bushy**
  - Project Manager
  - 1822 Mill Road
  - Grand Forks, ND 58206-3200
  - 701-795-4000
  - [jbushy@minnkota.com](mailto:jbushy@minnkota.com)





## **Clearbrook-Clearbrook West 115 kV Project Public Information and Scoping Meeting**

MPUC Docket no. ET6/TL-14-665  
Clearbrook, Minnesota  
February 22, 2016

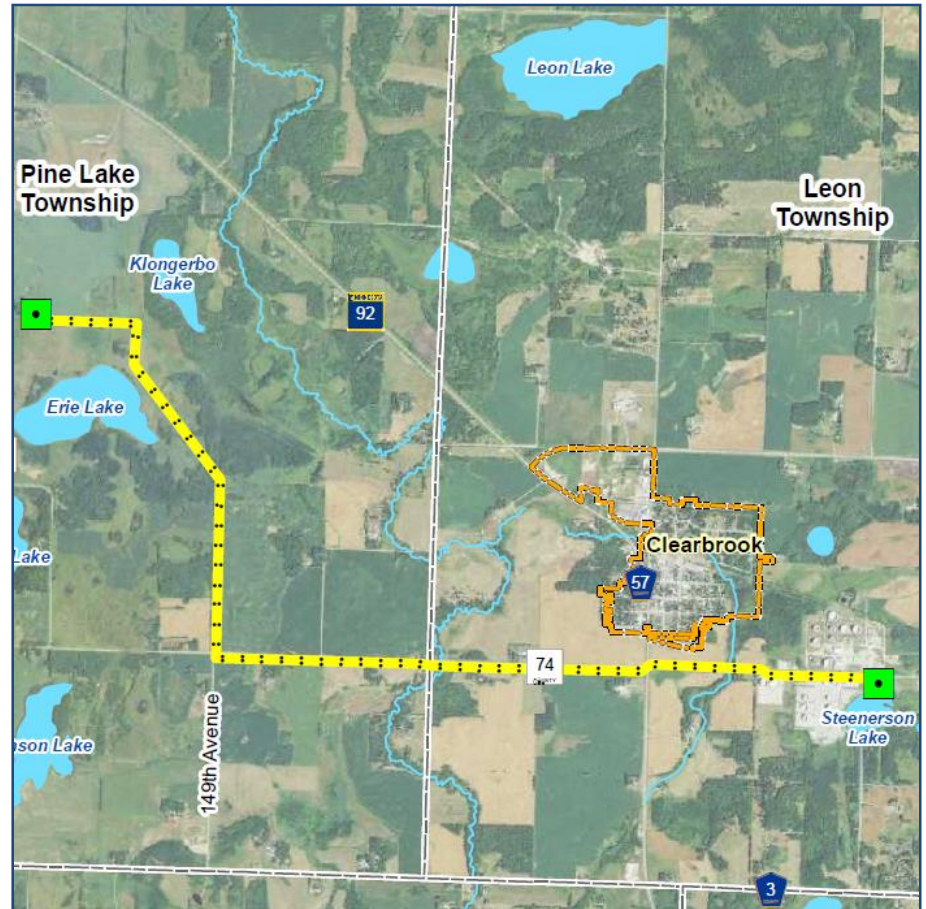
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# Clearbrook-Clearbrook West 115 kV Project

Minnkota Power Cooperative Transmission  
and Substation Project in Clearwater County

## Scoping the EA

David Birkholz, Environmental Review Manager  
Energy Environmental Review and Analysis



# What is EERA?

Energy Environmental Review and Analysis (EERA) provides technical expertise and assistance to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, and conducts environmental review.

- EERA and the Commission work cooperatively, but have distinct roles and function independently.
- EERA does not work for the applicant.
- EERA does not advocate for or against a project.

# Environmental Assessment (EA)

A tool for the public, agencies and decision-makers to assist in routing and permitting of a proposed project and alternatives:

- Discusses potential human and environmental impacts
- Identifies strategies for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating potential impacts

# EA Requirements

An EA must contain the following information:

- A **general description** of the proposed project;
- A list of any **alternative routes** to be addressed;
- A discussion of **potential impacts** on the human and natural environment;
- A discussion of **mitigative measures**;
- An analysis of the **feasibility** of each alternative;
- A list of **required permits**; and
- A discussion of **other matters** identified during scoping.

# EA Scope

Provides an outline for the EA developed for the project by identifying:

- Issues and Impacts to be addressed
- Alternative routes, if any, to be addressed
- Schedule for completion of the EA
- Other matters to be included in the EA; and
- Matters to be excluded from the EA.



# EA Scoping Comments

- What potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project should be studied in the EA?
- Are there any specific methods or potential changes to the proposed Project that could serve to avoid, reduce or mitigate these impacts that should be studied in the EA?
- Are there specific alternative routes that should be addressed in the EA?

# Scoping Comment: Impact

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

### DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENT

In the Matter of the Application of Minnkota Power Cooperative, Inc. for  
a Route Permit for the Clearbrook-Clearbrook West 115 kV Transmission  
Line and Substation Project in Clearwater County

PUC DOCKET no. ET 6/TL-14-665



## Impact (General)

- Rare and Unique Natural Resource



## Impact (Specific)

- Blandings Turtle

February 2016

Prepared by the Energy Environmental Review and Analysis Staff of the

# Scoping Comment: Suggesting Route Alternatives

Alternative Routes must:

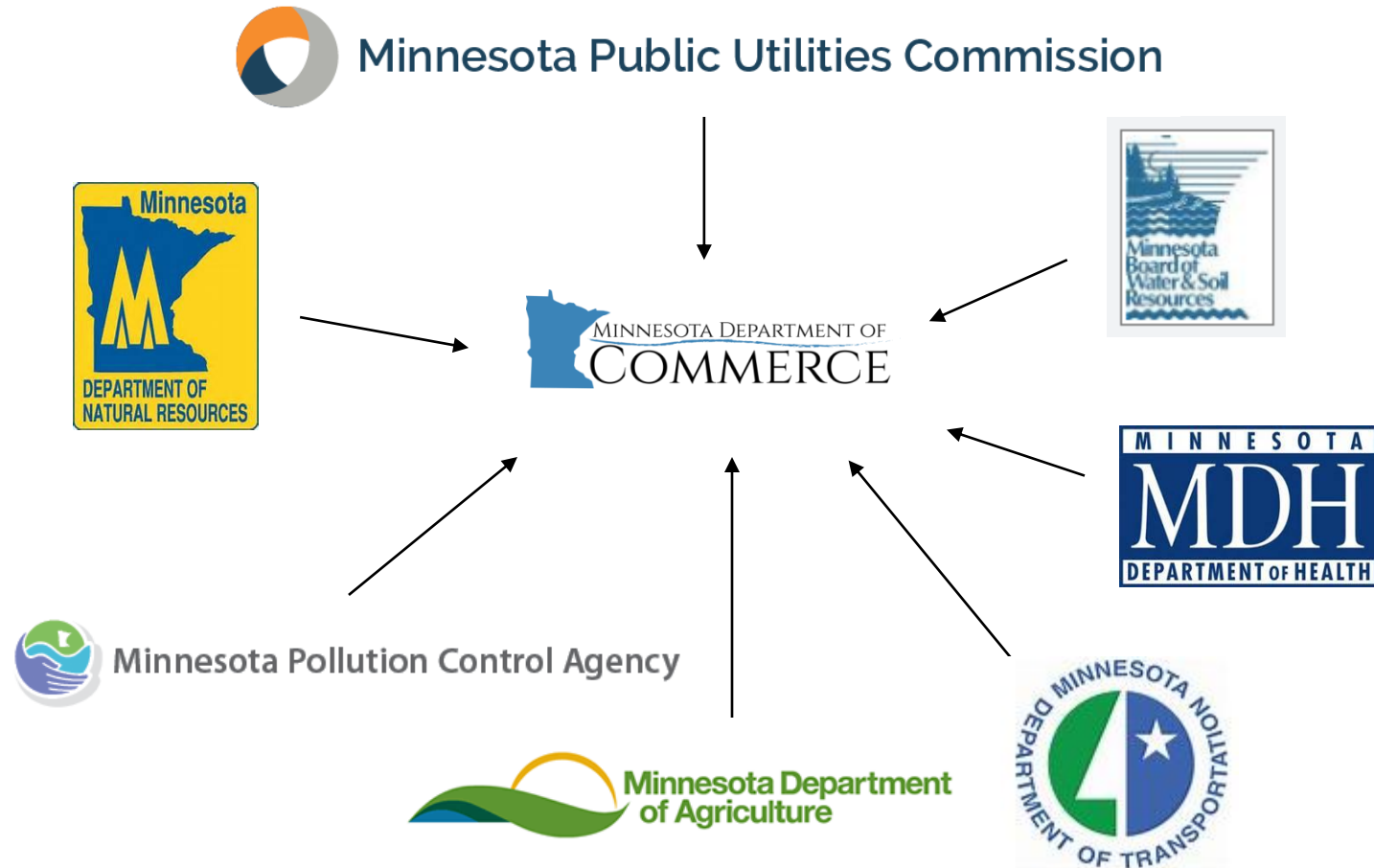
- Be specific and identifiable
- Mitigate a specific impact
- Meet the need for the project
- Be submitted on time
- Be feasible

Suggestions need to explain why an alternative should be included in the EA, and include all supporting information the person wants the Department to consider. Include a map.

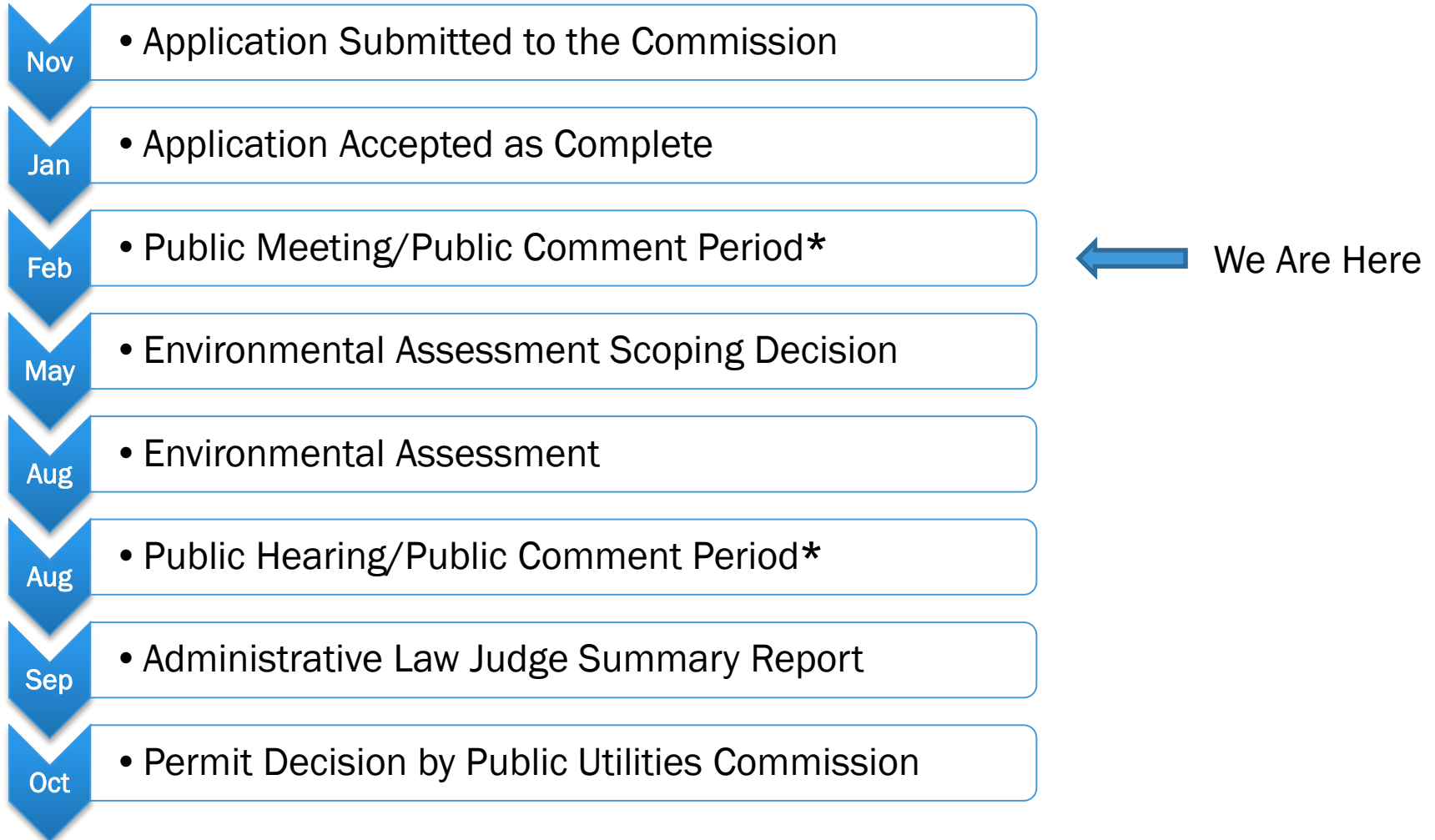
# Example: Re-Align with Cty Road



# Scoping Comment: Agency Input



# Environmental Review Timeline



\* Public Comment Opportunity

# Project Information

Department of Commerce  
Energy Environmental Review and Analysis  
Website for Clearbrook-Clearbrook West Project:

<http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/Docket.html?Id=33970>

# Department Contact

David Birkholz, Environmental Review Manager

Phone: 651-539-1838

800-657-3794

Email: [david.birkholz@state.mn.us](mailto:david.birkholz@state.mn.us)



# Scoping Comments

- Verbal Comments at Tonight's Meeting
- Complete and Submit a Comment Sheet
- Comment On-Line:  
<http://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/#comments>
- Mail, Fax, or Email a Comment:
  - David Birkholz  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
85 7<sup>th</sup> Place East, Suite 500  
St. Paul, MN 55101-2198
  - fax: 651-539-0109
  - [david.birkholz@state.mn.us](mailto:david.birkholz@state.mn.us)
- Comment Period Ends: **Monday, March 7, 2016**

# Public Comments

- One Speaker at a Time
- Please Limit Comments to a Few Minutes
- Please State and Spell Your Name for the Court Reporter
- Maintain Respect for Others
- Direct Your Comments/Questions to the Scope of the EA